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ABSTRACT

This report focuses on working effectively with elected officials and policy makers, and may be used as a guide for self-assessment and as a training tool. Following an introduction outlining the importance of working effectively with state and local policy makers and reviewing state laws concerning lobbying, the guide is divided into 15 sections detailing effective advocacy activities: (1) "infuse your work with a long-term vision for children"; (2) "organize your network"; (3) develop a legislative agenda:; (4) "do your homework"; (5) "build good relationships with your elected officials"; (6) communicate effectively with legislators and staff; (7) "personalize your issue"; (8) "actively pursue your agenda"; (9) "use your network"; (10) "use your legislators resource"; (11) learn to compromise and negotiate; (12) "express your appreciation and take opportunities to give credit to your legislator"; (13) work with candidates before they get elected; (14) do not forget the executive's office; and (15) work with agency administrators. Two appendices include sample fact sheets and other advocacy materials. (KB)

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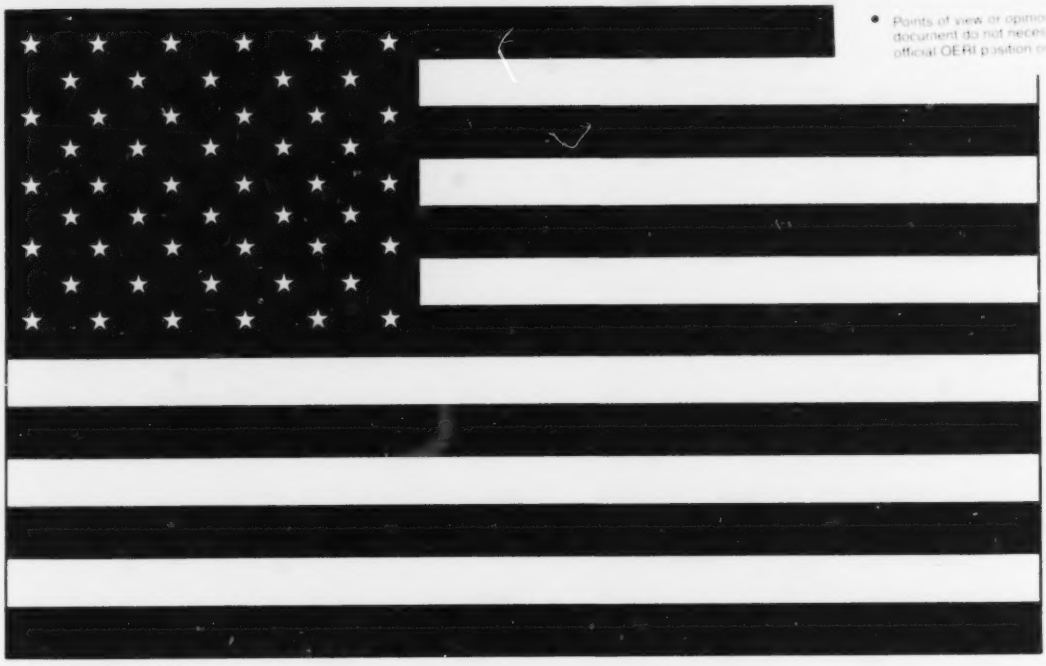

A GUIDE FOR EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION ADVOCATES

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October 1996

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About CDF

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) exists to provide a strong and effective voice for all the children of America who cannot vote, lobby, or speak for themselves. We pay particular attention to the needs of poor and minority children and those with disabilities. Our goal is to educate the nation about the needs of children and encourage preventive investment in children before they get sick, drop out of school, suffer family breakdown, or get into trouble.

CDF is a unique organization. CDF focuses on programs and policies that affect large numbers of children, rather than on helping families on a case-by-case basis. Our staff includes specialists in health, education, child welfare, mental health, child development, adolescent pregnancy prevention, family income, and youth employment. CDF gathers data and disseminates information on key issues affecting children. We monitor the development and implementation of federal and state policies. We provide information, technical assistance, and support to a network of state and local child advocates, service providers, and public and private sector officials and leaders. We pursue an annual legislative agenda in the U.S. Congress and in states where we have offices. CDF educates hundreds of thousands of citizens annually about children's needs and responsible options for meeting those needs.

CDF is a national organization with roots in communities across America. Although our main office is in Washington, DC, we reach out to towns and cities across the country to monitor the effects of changes in national and state policies and to help people and organizations concerned with what happens to children. CDF maintains state offices in Minnesota, Ohio, and Texas, and local project offices in Marlboro County (South Carolina), the District of Columbia, Greater Cincinnati, and New York City. CDF has developed cooperative projects with groups in many states.

The Black Community Crusade for Children (BCCC), developed by Black leaders and coordinated by CDF, is an initiative to mobilize the African American community behind a targeted effort to address the special problems facing Black children. The BCCC is part of CDF's overall work to ensure that *no* child is left behind and that *all* American children have a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start in life.

CDF is a private, nonprofit organization supported by foundations, corporate grants, and individual donations.

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INTRODUCTION

Improving child care options for America's children and families is a complex but exciting and achievable challenge. Successful advocacy requires advocates to actively pursue a variety of strategies to increase public support for child care. Organizing providers and parents, building community awareness, soliciting media coverage, garnering support from business and other community partners, and working with elected officials and policy makers are all on the must-do list for child care advocates.

This report focuses on a critical piece of the advocate's strategy kit -- working effectively with elected officials and policy makers. Developing good working relationships with state and local policy makers is particularly important for child care advocates. States have considerable discretion over child care policies and funding decisions. For example, they must appropriate enough state funds to draw down federal child care funds that are allocated to their state, set policies regarding child care and quality standards, eligibility, payment rates, and parent fees for parents who receive child care assistance. To ensure that states make wise decisions, advocates must be able to work effectively with their state officials on both sides of the political aisle to influence positive outcomes for child care. In addition, as states begin to make plans to implement changes caused by the new federal welfare reform law, child care advocates must be ready to ensure that child care is a successful component of any state welfare reform plan.

While it is important to know your subject and be a good technician, there are other equally important ingredients for successful advocacy. In addition to persistence, courage, and stamina, you'll need good interpersonal skills. Building strong relationships with legislators calls for many of the same skills essential to building sound relationships with any other human being. Therefore, one of the first steps in analyzing your effectiveness as an advocate is to consider how you are approaching legislators. It should be respectfully, thoughtfully, and as a good listener, as opposed to simply hammering away at your arguments with little regard to where your legislator might be, either personally or professionally.

This packet is designed as a guide for working with elected officials and policy makers. Use it to assess your own effectiveness as an individual or organization and consider new approaches to your advocacy work; share it with others who are or could be advocates for children. Use the pages following the introduction as a training tool for advocates in your area. While the report is focused on elected officials and policy makers, many of the lessons are relevant to working with state and local agency administrators as well. Two sections covering special issues related to working with executive and administrative officials are included at the end of the report, but strategies for building relationships with legislators apply equally to these officials as well.

Before you begin any legislative strategy, it is important to review your state laws concerning lobbying by charitable organizations. There may be state rules and restrictions regarding the amount of time and resources your organization can spend on certain activities. Generally, there is a differentiation between *educating* elected officials and *lobbying* elected officials. Educating elected officials about your issue is usually not a limited activity. Lobbying, however, involves efforts to influence the outcome of specific legislation, and the time and resources your organizations can spend on such efforts may be constrained by law.

Your state may also require the registration of all organizations engaged in lobbying activities In addition, federal IRS rules for 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations apply to lobbying and political activity at the federal, state, *and* local levels of government. A 501(c)(3) is likely to have additional restrictions on its lobbying or political activity if it receives any federal or state funds. The IRS rules allow a 501(c)(3) to lobby, but only up to a certain amount. If your organization falls into this category, check your funding documents and consult your lawyer about any such restrictions. It is also important to check your state's requirements for lobbyist registration. Check for particular limitations or restrictions on any state contract you hold.

In addition to knowing the limitations on lobbying activities, advocates should familiarize themselves with issues related to elections. The IRS does prohibit a 501(c)(3) from any political activity designed to (or proving to) help or hurt a candidate or party in an election. This does *not* prohibit a 501(c)(3) organization from engaging in such activities as issuing nonpartisan reports and data analyses, publishing elected officials' voting records for lobbying purposes, conducting nonpartisan voter registration drives, or obtaining candidate statements. However, if your organization is a 501(c)(3), you should ***consult with an attorney*** about the timing and form of these activities to be sure they don't cross the line of prohibited election activity. Penalties for breaking these rules include fines and loss of tax-exempt status.[1]

WORKING WITH STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS: A CHECKLIST

1. INFUSE YOUR WORK WITH A LONG-TERM VISION FOR CHILDREN

- ✓ Adopt a vision of what early care and education should look like.
- ✓ Have a well-defined purpose and chart a long-term course for achieving goals.
- ✓ Work with a broad group of advocates to develop a powerful, shared vision.

2. ORGANIZE YOUR NETWORK

- ✓ Organize an active and broad-based grass-roots network to attract the attention of local officials.
- ✓ Build coalitions of people with different interests (religious institutions, schools, charitable organizations, etc.) to illustrate the diverse support for child care.
- ✓ Do not neglect unlikely allies such as business leaders or law enforcement officials.

3. DEVELOP A LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

- ✓ Translate your vision into a legislative agenda.
- ✓ Set your sights high, but include items that are winnable.
- ✓ Set clear goals and plan precise methods to fulfill them.
- ✓ Proactive and positive: set an agenda that moves child care forward -- not one that only opposes negative proposals.
- ✓ Prioritize your issues.
- ✓ Be realistic about the legislative process and consider several paths to achieving your goals.

4. DO YOUR HOMEWORK

- ✓ Be informed and accurate about your issue.
- ✓ Study legislators' past voting records, personal background, relevant experiences, and campaign promises -- tailor your messages around them.
- ✓ Familiarize yourself with the budget process for your state.
- ✓ Develop a working knowledge of the legislative process, the timing of key decisions, and deadlines for bill changes.
- ✓ Identify your legislative allies and search for new ones.
- ✓ Be connected: identify and establish relationships with key leaders in the legislature.

5. BUILD GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

- ✓ Be positive: make advocacy a partnership, not an adversarial relationship.
- ✓ Be personal when communicating with legislators and work through people who know your legislators personally.
- ✓ Be an active listener so you can address and remove the legislator's opposing barriers.
- ✓ Be open: "pre-lobby" without an agenda; get to know all staff personally.
- ✓ Treat all elected officials with respect.

6. Communicate Effectively With Legislators And Staff

- ✓ Be brief, clear, and concise.
- ✓ Spell out your goals clearly; eliminate jargon; use language the legislators will be responsive to.
- ✓ Be sure your materials are quotable.
- ✓ Be prepared: anticipate arguments against your position and incorporate responses into initial presentation.

7. Personalize Your Issue

- ✓ Explain how current and proposed policies will affect families in the legislators' districts.
- ✓ Bring families and children to meetings with elected officials to help humanize issues.
- ✓ Invite legislators to visit early childhood programs.
- ✓ Consider using Child Watch as a vehicle for educating elected officials.

8. Actively Pursue Your Agenda

- ✓ Schedule frequent lobby days to help pass your bills, but also as part of your ongoing relationship with legislators.
- ✓ Be sensitive to the timing of visits and introduction of bills.
- ✓ Use varied tactics.
- ✓ Always seek bipartisan support and never stop looking for new allies.
- ✓ Consider hiring an experienced lobbyist to supplement your efforts.
- ✓ Think creatively; find ways of drawing attention to your issue that will excite your legislators and your network.
- ✓ Locate public awareness events strategically -- use a combination of grass-roots activity, lobbying at the state Capitol, and working with the media.
- ✓ Develop a slogan or message.
- ✓ Hold community forums as a non-threatening way to educate your legislator about various child care perspectives.

9. Use Your Network

- ✓ Make sure that legislators hear from their constituents about child care.
- ✓ Inundate legislators with letters and phone calls at strategic times.
- ✓ Keep your network informed so they are ready to respond; update them on the impact of their actions.
- ✓ Be reasonable: have consideration for your network and the demands on their time.
- ✓ Train advocates in the off-season by simulating the legislative process.

10. Use Your Legislators As A Resource

- ✓ Ask legislators for information that would be helpful.
- ✓ Encourage your allies in the legislature to recruit new supporters for child care.

11. Learn To Compromise And Negotiate

- ✓ Learn when to compromise -- be willing to help legislators work through the difficult issues tied to passing a bill.
- ✓ Offer positive solutions -- stay away from "anti" positions and rhetoric.
- ✓ Be realistic and prepared to make tough choices.
- ✓ Recognize that change often happens by taking small steps toward an ultimate goal.

12. Express Your Appreciation And Give Credit To Your Legislator

- ✓ Be courteous and appreciative.
- ✓ Always write thank-you letters.
- ✓ Honor those who have been long-time champions of better child care policies.
- ✓ Spend time with reporters -- good press is appreciated by legislators.

13. Work With Candidates Before They Get Elected

- ✓ Educate prospective office-holders about child care issues.
- ✓ Work with those developing a candidate's platform, and encourage them to include child care initiatives.
- ✓ Put together a forum on child care issues during the election process.
- ✓ Be cautious -- remember that if you work for a nonprofit organization, you can devote time and resources to an individual candidate only if it is *your own* time and has no association with the organization for which you work.

14. Do Not Forget The Executive's Office

- ✓ Focus your efforts beyond the legislature and interact with the governor's office: his or her support is crucial for improvements in child care funding and policies.
- ✓ Do the same homework about the governor's (and governor's staff's) background as you do with the legislature.

15. Work With Agency Administrators

- ✓ Be involved: work to influence agency recommendations and regulations.
- ✓ Be prepared: do your homework at the agency level.
- ✓ Understand that sometimes an agency will be unable to act independently of a governor's orders.

1. Infuse Your Work With A Long-Term Vision

Good advocates think ahead and are guided by a long-term vision that lays out what early childhood and school-age opportunities children need to grow and thrive. While it is often necessary to compromise and make tough decisions, you must be fueled by an ultimate vision of what early care and education should look like. A well-defined purpose will help you focus your attention and chart a long-term course best designed to achieve your goals. Make sure that your vision is developed and shared by a broad group of children's advocates. A shared vision has much more power than one developed in isolation. After working together to develop a vision, your network will be more invested in working together to make it a reality.

> Ohio advocates developed a bold vision of establishing a state funding stream for Head Start that would enable *all* eligible Ohio children to participate in the program. They shared their vision with Governor George V. Voinovich and state legislators. Their vision has helped put Ohio closer than any other state in the nation to achieving this goal. Advocates worked with both Democratic and Republican administrations and legislators. In 1997, Ohio will serve more than 70 percent of eligible preschool children, the highest participation rate of any state. State funding has grown from $5.4 million in 1990 to $77.2 million in 1997.

2. Organize Your Network

One of the first tasks for an effective advocate is to put in place a grass-roots network. Elected officials will be aware of who you are representing when you speak with them, and will pay closer attention to the issues of concern to the people living in their district. They often respond to the greatest number of voters expressing concern for or against an issue; an active network can produce the volume of letters and calls that can move an official to support your position.

Your organization may already represent a broad network or you may need to expand your network to ensure that you represent the constituency of those you seek to influence. In addition, once your network is established, it should be organized so that its members can be quickly reached and mobilized. A well-organized, broad-based network will provide the support necessary to make your efforts more successful.

Be Comprehensive

- In every electoral district, appoint one point person who is concerned about better early childhood and school-age opportunities and willing to help out.[2] This person does not always have to be directly connected to these issues.

The Day Care Action Council of Illinois operates an effective grass-roots network, with a district coordinator in each of the 59 state senate districts (most of which cover two state house districts). Most of the district coordinators are child care providers or Resource and Referral staff. Their job is to maintain a local network of people who can receive information and be mobilized to reach their legislators. Coordinators also organize media events at the district level. The coordinators stay informed through alerts via a fax broadcast network that is inexpensive and simple to access on a computer. The network also has regional coordinators, who communicate directly with the district coordinators. The use of regional coordinators makes communication from the state level more manageable because the state office does not have to be responsible for following up with 59 district coordinators.

- Do not limit your network to children's organizations. Legislators must understand that early care and education is a need shared by many of their constituents. They may see a network that is solely provider-based as too narrowly self-interested. Religious leaders can attest that if states cut back their child care support, charitable organizations will be unable to pick up the slack. Religious institutions and membership organizations can also publicize and seek support for your efforts within their membership.[3]

Wisconsin advocates recently forged a coalition with elderly groups against the governor's welfare reform plan, which would significantly limit parents' choices of high-quality child care options. The groups developed a poster highlighting their joint opposition to the plan and posted copies in the bathrooms of the state Capitol, where state legislators would see them.

- Building coalitions of people with different interests also helps to ensure that children's advocates are working *together*, and not at cross purposes.[4] Seek out parents, women's organizations, teachers, school administrators, employers, physicians and other health professionals, senior citizens, and religious organizations, among others.

In the early 1980s, national child care leaders joined forces with women's organizations and elderly groups in a unique coalition: the Multigenerational Coalition on Dependent Care. The need for increased funding for the Title XX Social Services Block Grant cut across generation lines, as Title XX was a critical source of funding for child care as well as services for the elderly. The group joined with the National Association of Counties, the American Public Welfare Association, and labor unions; their major push to restore funds to Title XX was built on their efforts with legislators around the Dependent Care Credit. They won a significant increase in funds for Title XX.

Do not neglect unlikely allies, even if they are not obvious targets for participation in a legislative network. Kindergarten teachers, for example, can advocate for high-quality early childhood experiences that ensure that children come to their classrooms ready to succeed. Business leaders can attest to the strong link between employer productivity and reliable

child care and are likely to have ties to a group of officials that other members of your network cannot easily reach.

> For example, strong support from the business community has buttressed efforts to expand Head Start. This support has ranged from endorsements of full funding from organizations such as the Business Round Table, to testimony by key CEOs at Congressional hearings, to appearances by business leaders in films about Head Start. In addition, Primerica (now Travelers, Inc.) supported advertisements, public service announcements, and a grass-roots campaign encouraging their employees to support Head Start.

Police and law enforcement officials might help make the case for after-school care to keep children safe and help prevent violence.

> A new national organization, **Fight Crime: Invest in Kids**, has recruited an advisory committee made up of former and current police chiefs and commissioners, state prosecutors, and crime survivors. Their policy agenda, An American Crime Prevention Agenda, includes a range of supportive policies for children and families that they argue will help decrease violence and crime. The group is currently working to set up similar organizations at the state level, with corresponding state advisory boards.

3. Develop A Legislative Agenda

Guided by your vision, decide on the practical steps necessary to move toward your goals. These steps need to be translated into a legislative agenda that can ultimately become law. Your agenda should cover the major issues that you would like the legislature and state agencies to address that year. While it is important to set your sights high, it is equally critical to select several agenda items that you believe are winnable. Each legislative or administrative gain that you make builds momentum for further change.

Be Realistic

- As you start out, remember that you are unlikely to achieve your ultimate vision in just one legislative session. For example, it may be possible to pass a bill that puts in place the structure necessary to achieve your vision. However, it may take more time to obtain the funding necessary to improve early care and education services for every child who needs them. Or, it might be possible to include components of your vision in a series of bills and pass each one separately.
- Prioritize your issues.
- Do not set an agenda that is too ambitious, but also make sure to be proactive and set goals that are not too modest.

Be Positive And Proactive

- ✧ Once you have your vision firmly in place, work with your coalition at the beginning of each legislative session to set a proactive agenda that will move you toward your vision.
- ✧ Set an agenda that moves child care forward, rather than one that only opposes negative proposals.

Be Strategic

- ✧ Be precise about what you want to accomplish and how you plan to get there. Progress is made when advocates set clear goals concerning what they want to see for children and families and a well-designed plan for accomplishing legislative goals.

4. Do Your Homework

Good advocates always do their homework. First, you must have in hand not only legislators' past voting records, but also personal information about your legislators, staff, and officials; look for experiences that might be relevant to their way of thinking. Second, you must understand who in the legislature besides your own members you need to get to know. Third, you need to understand how the legislative process works and the timing of key decisions such as appropriations or budget matters. Fourth, you must know your facts and understand your opponent's position.

Be Prepared

- ✧ Gather personal information about legislators. Find out each legislator's religion, previous or current career (in many states, state legislators have other jobs), and number and ages of children. Does their spouse work, and at what occupation? Do their grown daughters work? Are their children or grandchildren in child care? Find out about interests and organization memberships. Most states have some type of "blue book" that contains pictures and mini-biographies of legislators. It is a good source of basic information about legislators' backgrounds. The blue book also contains legislators' office phone numbers and addresses.[5]
- ✧ If the legislator has staff, gather similar personal information about the staff as well. Know the names of all staff, including the legislator's secretary/scheduler. With more states enacting term limits for their legislators, staff members may know more about issues than new legislators do. Although some legislators have very small staffs, there is a trend in many states toward increasingly larger legislative staffs.[6]
- ✧ Get to know the legislative research staff responsible for drafting bills. They are critical to the development of legislation.

- ✧ Research how your legislators have voted on issues in the past and whether they have sponsored any child care or child-related legislation. Learn what campaign promises they made and what platform they ran on. Tailor your messages around these campaign promises. For example, if they promised to put welfare mothers back to work, argue, "Let's work together to provide the supportive child care that is necessary for welfare mothers to go back to work," or, "You cannot put mothers of young children back to work unless supportive child care is available." To get this information, talk to staff, other lobbyists, and other children's advocates, read the newspaper, and conduct library research.

- ✧ Find out what committees your legislator serves on. Those who serve on committees responsible for child care have opportunities to influence certain child care decisions and have more stature over the issue.

- ✧ Know who your allies in the legislature are likely to be, and always be in search of new ones, even among unlikely candidates. However, be cautious about approaching a legislator who has a continuously negative record on a wide range of children's issues. It may be better not to dedicate significant amounts of time and energy to working with legislators who are adamantly against your position. However, make sure you know what these legislators are proposing, so you can address what you may believe is wrong with their positions.

Be Connected

- ✧ Be very familiar with the legislators for your own district, but also get to know the chairpersons, ranking minority members, and key members of the committees and subcommittees that handle child care issues, as well as their staffs. They decide which child care bills will go to the floor for a vote.

- ✧ Establish relationships with the leaders of your legislature, including the majority leader, the minority leader, the speaker of the house, etc. Find out which staff member in each of their offices is responsible for child care issues, and work closely with that person.

Solicit Support Wisely

- ✧ When trying to get a bill introduced, you may increase the likelihood of passage if you have a sponsor with seniority.[7] On the other hand, a new member trying to make a name for himself or herself may put more energy into passing the legislation.

- ✧ Always seek bipartisan support and sponsorship for your issue. To be a major factor in the debate, you will need to work with both sides of the issue.

Be Aware of the Process

- ✧ Understand the legislative process and make sure that your issue demands a legislative solution. If it does, be clear about what legislative steps are necessary to reach your goal. Know whether an issue can be better addressed through the governor's office or a state agency, as a regulatory or administrative issue.

- ✧ Timing is crucial. Know the deadlines that exist for bills and amendments to be filed, keep track of hearing and committee schedules, and know the floor schedule for debate and amendments. Be aware that these schedules can change rapidly.
- ✧ Be familiar with the budget process for your state. Many important decisions about children's services are made not in separate bills but through budget negotiations.
- ✧ Know whether the person who oversees the budget is the presiding officer, the majority leader, or the budget committee chair.[8]

Be Informed and Accurate

- ✧ Use real-life stories to explain the impact of proposed policies.[9] Help legislators understand a proposal's impact on families in their communities.
- ✧ Use examples of programs in other states that have worked. If legislators are skeptical of these programs, explain the tools that were used to measure the success of these models.
- ✧ Use statistics that are absolutely correct. Resist the urge to exaggerate or exclude crucial facts. You will have much more influence if you are known for having correct information, but will immediately lose your credibility if you are found using incorrect statistics. If possible, try to have a citation for your facts. If someone asks you a question to which you don't know the answer, it is all right to say you don't know and offer to get the answer or name someone who may have it.
- ✧ Use facts that pertain to a legislator's district and/or counties.[10] Obtain local data through the census, the state licensing office, or county waiting lists of families who need child care assistance. Help legislators justify expenditures to their constituents. If at all possible, use dollar figures that reveal long-term savings or cost benefits. Evaluations or data showing that programs have had a concrete impact on children and families are also helpful. For example, reports on how training dollars are used in child care programs in the district or how training has affected the quality of care offered to children can be valuable.

> A report from the Florida Children's Forum lets legislators know that in 1994, 24,000 Florida families who had been on welfare were able to get employment or training leading to employment because they received child care assistance, and 20,000 children left the welfare rolls because subsidized child care was available.

- ✧ Make sure that you inform legislators about both sides of the issue.[11] Never blind-side a legislator or staff member by withholding information. Tell them who your opponents are and why they oppose your issues. You will benefit in the long run by giving members the entire picture, so they will not be caught off guard by the opposition.
- ✧ Use quotes from key leaders, such as employers in your community, to support investments in child care or the value of certain key services.

The Florida Children's Forum has compiled a list of quotes from business and community leaders about the value of their services and the importance of a resource and referral network. These quotes help to convince the public and policy makers about the economic importance of good child care and resource and referral services. One example:

Polly Ostrom, Star-Banner, Ocala, Florida
"We at the Star-Banner employ just under 200 people. Employees are referred to Childcare Links when questions arise regarding child care. Employees not only learn where care can be located, but also receive information to help them select the proper child care program based on the specific needs of the individual."

5. Build Good Relationships With Your Elected Officials

Building strong relationships with legislators calls for many of the same skills essential to building sound relationships with any other human being. This is a key component of successful advocacy, and must be a year-round effort. Spending time getting to know your legislators and their staff in an unpressured setting helps to create some of the strongest relationships. It is helpful to spend time with legislators when you do not have to ask them for something or when there is no "hot" early childhood or school-age issue on the front burner. It is especially important to develop relationships with staffs of members on appropriations and budget committees before you hope to ask them to fund a particular initiative. Legislators and their staff are eager to get information that they can use in speeches and when working with constituents.

Be Personal

- Use a personal approach, whenever possible, when communicating with your legislators. State legislators need not always be contacted through their offices. In many states, legislators are at home on the weekends and can be approached at local stores, in the parks, or at church or synagogue. If you see your legislator outside of the office, discuss your concerns briefly. A fundamental part of human nature is that we are more likely to respond to those people we know and like.[12] If you can consistently speak with your legislators when they are home, you can help them understand how important child care is to the people in the district.

- Work through people who know your legislators personally. If someone in your organization is a neighbor or has some other affiliation with a legislator, have that member contact the legislator on a personal level. If you are setting up an appointment or issuing an invitation to a legislator, try to go through someone who has a personal link to that legislator.[13]

- If you cannot make a personal contact with the legislator outside regular work hours, contact the office scheduler for an appointment with the legislator or with the staff member who handles child care issues.

Be Open

- ✧ If possible, first visit new legislators or staff without a specific request for legislative action. This is an effective way to "pre-lobby" and to present yourself as a valuable resource without asking for something or pressuring members. Staff can turn over quickly, so keep track of new staff members. Set up appointments to meet new staff members soon after they are hired. Be the first to brief them on the current child care issues, get to know them personally, and become their primary resource on the issue.

- ✧ An effective advocate is an active listener. Listen for the concerns or barriers a legislator raises as reasons to oppose your issue, so that you can then go about addressing and removing those barriers. Listen to your legislator and ask questions, rather than assuming you know how he or she stands on every issue. Recognize that legislators do change their minds on issues, especially if they have had a personal experience with the issue.[14] For example, a legislator who two years ago did not support increasing money for quality improvement may now have a grandchild in child care and may now consider quality an important issue. It is important to never give up on legislators, except those that you are certain hold the most extreme views against your position. However, you must maintain some contact, even with legislators who hold positions directly opposed to yours. This will help you understand the arguments that they use with their legislative colleagues in opposing your proposals.

Be Positive

- ✧ Make advocacy a partnership, not an adversarial relationship. If you consistently provide legislators with good information, they will begin to depend on you for child care information. Offer to serve as a referral when constituents call them for information on child care.

- ✧ Whatever their beliefs or background, treat all elected officials with *respect*. Don't assume that because a legislator votes against certain bills for children that he or she will oppose child care initiatives. Remember that you can develop an understanding and a working relationship even with someone whose experiences and beliefs are completely different from yours.

6. Communicate Effectively With Legislators And Staff

Being an effective communicator, both in speech and on paper, is a key component of successful advocacy. Legislators appreciate crisp and clear explanations of what the problem is and how they can solve it. They handle many issues and do not have the time to wade through long, rambling documents. Even when working with staff members assigned to your issues, do not assume they have extensive knowledge and understand what you are talking about. Offer yourself as a resource to help the staff person succeed.

Be Brief

- ✧ Think through your arguments carefully and make your case quickly. Because a legislator's or staff member's schedule is hectic, short is always better than long. Brevity helps hold your listener's attention and allows time for his or her questions.
- ✧ Tailor your facts to fit on one page. Distribute your fact sheets to both legislators and staff. Include charts, tables or maps.[15] Having something visual to understand and keep will help the person you are speaking with remember what you said. (See Appendix for sample fact sheets.)
- ✧ Have a friendly staff person comment on any materials that you are uncertain of before you distribute them. Make sure your materials are quotable. Legislative staff appreciate facts that they can use in speeches and publications.

Be Clear

- ✧ Make sure you express your legislative goal clearly and spell out exactly what position you want your legislator to support.
- ✧ Eliminate the jargon and present your facts in easy-to-understand phrases. This will help you communicate more successfully with a wide variety of people, and will help your message move them. For example, do not talk about a "quality set-aside" and assume legislators will know what this means. If you have done your homework, you will know how to word your concerns in a way that your legislator can relate to and understand.
- ✧ Use language you know legislators and staff will be responsive to. Use their vocabulary and make your case in language that they use frequently. For example, explain how child care strengthens "family values" or "puts people to work." You may need to say children should come to school "ready to learn" rather than "ready to succeed," depending on who you are speaking with. Develop language for your issue that can be shared. In many states the salient issues are jobs and self-sufficiency. Tie the argument for increased funding for child care to these concerns. Talk about child care as an investment in your state's future.

Be Prepared

- ✧ Anticipate the arguments against your position and incorporate your responses in your initial presentation. If your opponents are distributing information against your position, know what this information includes and how to rebut their arguments.[16]

7. Personalize Your Issue

It is helpful to personalize your issue. Elected officials are often isolated from early childhood or poverty issues. They need to hear directly from the parents and the children

who are affected by their policies. Attaching faces and names to the facts and figures helps humanize the issue.

- ✧ Try to get families, especially low-income parents, to come and talk with legislators rather than always having someone else tell their story. Legislators are also more likely to think a person who is affected by the policy is more sincere than a paid lobbyist. Bring children with you when you visit legislators and their staff. If a child is old enough, consider having them testify at committee hearings.[17] Be sure to bring only children who will not be disruptive during the meeting and remember to bring things that children can play with while the adults talk. If families cannot come to see a legislator, share their stories with policy makers.

- ✧ Help legislators understand how legislation will affect the families that you serve or others living in communities in the district.

> An excellent example of personalizing an issue is the successful strategy used by California advocates to enact Trustline, a statewide database to check the criminal backgrounds of child care providers exempt from state licensing rules but receiving public funds. Mothers whose children died or were injured while in child care fought vigorously to establish Trustline. Several of these mothers also traveled to Washington, D.C., to testify for the passage of the Child Care and Development Block Grant and to participate in a press conference.

- ✧ Invite your legislators to visit child care, Head Start or prekindergarten programs -- those that need additional resources as well as those that are successful.[18] Sometimes it is effective to have someone who already has a relationship with the legislator extend the invitation. Present the invitation not as a challenge, but as an opportunity: elected officials can use these visits as photo opportunities. To keep the visit as non-threatening as possible, keep the interactions informal and personal by limiting the number of participants. Ask the legislator ahead of time what media attention she or he wants the visit to receive, and then respect those wishes. Keep the attention on the visit positive and praise the legislator for attending, even if the visit doesn't have the desired effect on his or her policy decisions.[19] Use the visit as a basis for an article in your newsletter and be sure to send a copy to the legislator.

> For example, A family child care provider in Washington state invited the governor to her home, along with parents and children, to plant a tree for the children who died in the Oklahoma City bomb blast. Parents spent time with the governor, discussing the importance of the Child and Adult Care Food Program and how difficult it would be for them to afford child care without the benefits that CACFP offered to their children.

- ✧ Consider using Child Watch as a vehicle for inviting your legislator to child care programs. CDF has a Child Watch guide available which is specifically tailored to Child Watch activities related to early care and education. [Contact CDF's Child Watch

Division at (202) 628-8787 for more information on how to use this CDF community education tool to further your early childhood and education goals.]

8. Actively Pursue Your Agenda

Good advocates do not depend on the whim of the legislature to accomplish their agenda. They are strategic -- carefully thinking through the steps necessary to reach their goals. It is important not only to develop an initial plan, but also to be mindful of the most appropriate strategies to use as your legislative campaign moves forward.

Use Varied Tactics

- ✧ Schedule lobby days to help pass your bills, but do not use lobby days as an isolated strategy for contacting legislators. Lobby days are most effective if you have an ongoing relationship with your legislators. If a child care group visits their offices only once a year, then lobby days will have very little effect. Work with other children's organizations to schedule *frequent* lobby days, so that children's concerns are always represented at the Capitol. It is effective to conduct a legislative breakfast or lobby day at the beginning of a legislative session.

> The Children's Budget Coalition holds a weekly lobby day in Olympia, the Washington state capital. This coalition includes almost 40 statewide organizations that have an interest in children's issues. Each year, the coalition meets and identifies budget issues they want to follow. Each organization adopts a Thursday to have their members go to the Capitol and lobby. Therefore, every Thursday there is a presence in the state legislature on behalf of children. Lobbyists wear bright-orange stick-on badges to identify themselves, and legislators know that people wearing those badges are "the kids people."
>
> Every lobby day begins with a briefing by the paid, professional lobbyists or the experts currently working on the key issues. The coalition uses the same room each week. Word has spread that people wanting to talk to their legislators about children should go to the seventh floor of the Senate Capitol building each Thursday at 10 a.m. This session lasts an hour. Speakers give the participants fact sheets they can distribute to legislators and their staff. At 11 a.m. there is an advocacy training session for the new participants, to provide them with practical lobbying skills. This session includes role-playing to practice answering tough questions about the policies they are advocating for. At noon there is an optional brown-bag lunch that includes all of the children's and low-income professional lobbyists at the Capitol. Each lobbyist gives an update on her or his issue, and helps participants understand all of the issues affecting children that year, rather than just the issues the coalition has targeted. The rest of the day is spent visiting with legislators and their staffs.

Two things have been identified as contributing to the effectiveness of weekly lobby days. First, paid lobbyists are used in conjunction with the child advocates who lobby once a week. A full-time lobbyist isn't necessary, but a part-time lobbyist still establishes a consistent presence at the Capitol and provides expertise on the issues to share with the weekly advocates. Second, there is an additional grass-roots component. Everyone connected to the coalition is involved in advocating for children year-round by making phone calls or writing letters to legislators once a week. This weekly action is designed to take no more than five minutes and helps keep all of the child advocates unified and informed.

- ✧ Hold a legislative briefing, not only to push a particular position but to present new data and information or expert witnesses on an issue.
- ✧ Be sensitive to the timing of visits and the introduction of bills. A big push for child care might succeed in an election year, when candidates are sensitive to "gender" issues. Also, be sure you know the time needed for legislators to act. Understand the legislative timeline and pose requests at the appropriate times. Requests for increases in child care spending presented at the *end* of the budget debate are unlikely to be successful.
- ✧ Consider hiring a paid lobbyist to supplement your efforts. The lobbyist need not work full-time for your organization. Contract with a lobbyist for part-time work or join with other similar organizations to fund a lobbyist to cover all of your issues. An experienced lobbyist will have a much deeper knowledge of how things work in your legislature, as well as a wider range of contacts.

THINK CREATIVELY

- ✧ Creativity by itself will not pass a bill. However, creative ways of drawing attention to your issue can energize legislators *and* your grass-roots network. Be cautious, however, not to overuse certain tactics, or they can become counter-productive. The following examples illustrate creative methods of increasing awareness of child care issues:

Colorado advocates placed life-size dolls with messages about individual children's needs on the chairs of state legislators in the Colorado state Capitol. The dolls helped to win millions of dollars in new investments for services to children and families.

Florida advocates rolled the waiting list of the more than 25,000 families who needed child care assistance down the steps of the state Capitol, to dramatize the magnitude of parents' need for help in paying for child care

While working toward the passage of the federal Act for Better Child Care (Child Care and Development Block Grant), advocates created thousands of miles of paper chains, which provided the back-drop for many local rallies for the ABC bill. The chains were sent to Washington, D.C., where they were displayed at a variety of rallies and press conferences in the last month before the bill was passed. Members of Congress were urged to hang the chains on their doors after the final rally to express support for enacting the bill.

- ✧ Invite legislators, state and local officials, representatives of the media, and community leaders to forums such as Community Dialogues, where parents, providers, early childhood experts, and others, seated in a kiva or a round, talk about how child care or Head Start affects them, while members of the audience, seated at several round tables, listen in. The audience members can then question the central group and discuss among themselves how the issue affects them. This format offers a non-threatening way to educate your legislator about various child care perspectives. [For information about Community Dialogues, contact Detra Stoddard at (202) 662-3544].

- ✧ Send large numbers of postcards; this tactic is "easy, fun, low-cost and able to attract media."[20] Think about setting aside a day on which a legislator can walk in a child care provider's or working mother's footsteps and see what child care needs exist in the community.[21] Consider making scrapbooks that detail what happens during a typical day in a child care center or family child care home.

On Worthy Wage Day, child care providers in Spokane, Washington, invited legislators to job-shadow 10 family child care homes and five child care centers. Legislators performed an array of tasks, ranging from reading children a story, to helping serve lunch, to cleaning toilets. The day led many of them to speak up and support high-quality child care. It also generated a positive editorial in the local paper.

- ✧ When developing a legislative strategy, never rely solely on one method to influence the legislature. A successful legislative strategy uses a combination of grass-roots activity, media, and lobbying at the state Capitol.

- ✧ Use public awareness events strategically. Hold events and forums designed to build support for legislation. Locate the events as close to the Capitol as possible while the legislature is in session, to increase the chance that legislators can attend. Press may also be more likely to attend press conferences or briefings that are held close to the Capitol if the legislature is in session. Find out what exemplary child care centers are within walking distance from the Capitol and use them for press and other events.[22]

- ✧ Demonstrations with a sizable number of participants are useful for energizing members of your legislative network and can help draw public attention to your issue. While they are not always the most effective strategy for passing bills, demonstrations can help your volunteers feel that they are a part of a broader movement. It is important to encourage the media to cover your demonstration to maximize legislative impact.

In Utah, JEDI Women (Justice, Economic Dignity, and Independence for Women), an organization of low-income mothers, faced a long waiting list for child care assistance. When the governor and legislators refused to heed their pleas for increased funds to help more families with child care costs, they staged a sit-in at the governor's office and held a press conference. They used a large key to make the point that child care was the key to staying off welfare. They actually ended up spending the night. The results were more money for child care and the elimination of the waiting list.

- Develop a slogan or message. A message used over and over again can be an effective tactic for getting attention and also conveying an important fact.

In Minnesota, advocates have used the message "Child Care Keeps Minnesota Working" for a number of years. This year legislators in Minnesota understood that if they wanted to reform welfare, they needed to provide child care for low-income families. The legislative network Child Care Works produces a 3" by 8" card that contains a yellow *yield* sign with their message, their agenda for that year and the Child Care Works logo. The coalition also sends advocates a newsletter whose title, "In The Works," continues to play off their message. Minnesota has increased its funding for child care subsidies substantially since the campaign began, but still has waiting lists for families who need child care assistance; the state also still needs to address the quality of child care. The current message doesn't focus on quality, or on child care as early education, so advocates are considering creating another slogan that conveys the importance of having children enter school ready to learn.

9. USE YOUR NETWORK

Hearing from their own "grass roots" constituencies is always important to legislators. Elected officials owe their offices to their constituents, and this clearly discourages them from ignoring constituent concerns. Different network members will play different roles. Some constituents will be key spokespeople, always willing to pitch in on even the most technical issues, while others are more comfortable just writing or calling with a limited message. Both types of communication help legislators understand that many constituents are concerned about early childhood issues.

BE PREPARED

✧ Keep your network informed as the legislative process unfolds. Simple monthly mailings keep them up to date and tell them about the next steps to take in your particular campaign. People are much more likely to act if they feel a part of the process, understand what is going on, and realize why their input is important. If possible, assign a point person to coordinate and communicate with the network on a regular basis. When making action requests, provide your network with sample letters, telephone scripts, and fact sheets and issue papers.[23]

- Train advocates in the off-season, before the legislative session begins, by simulating the legislative process.

> The Washington state Children's Budget Coalition conducts three-hour simulations to show their advocates how legislation is passed. The first part of the training session is a civics lesson, teaching participants the structure of their legislature and how a bill becomes law. During the second part of the session participants are assigned roles as legislators, media, the speaker of the house, the governor, etc. They then simulate an entire legislative session, with every 20 minutes representing one week. The simulations work well with 50 to 150 participants. In the fall of 1996, the coalition also conducted an advocacy retreat to help prepare advocates for the next session of the legislature. For more information on how to conduct your own simulation, contact the Fair Budget Action Campaign at 206-727-0369.

- Pair novice advocates with more experienced ones; people learn well by example. After visiting a legislator's office, always leave the legislator or staff member a fact sheet with a contact name and phone number to call for more information.[24] Encourage your participants to follow up their visits by sending a thank-you note to each legislator and staff member they visited, whether or not the official offered support for the issue.[25]

- Remind everyone to wear comfortable shoes.

Use Letters and Phone Calls

- Inundate legislators with phone calls and/or letters from their constituents at strategic times. One good time is when you are seeking co-sponsorship of a bill and need to convince your legislator of its broad-based support. Another is when a bill is about to be voted on and your legislator's support seems to be wavering. Even a modest number of calls can bring success. At the state level, legislators may believe their entire district supports a bill, once they receive 10 phone calls or letters in favor of it. The smaller a legislator's staff, the more overwhelming the impact of a few letters.[26] Consider tying up key members' office phone lines at a critical time, such as when a House leader is wavering about scheduling a major bill for a vote. This strategy gets legislators' attention, because it creates such a hassle in their offices. However, be ready to call off the calls promptly when legislators tell you that they have gotten the point.

- Ask as many people as possible to write letters to their legislators. Personal letters are more effective than a form letter or petition. An effective letter should be short -- one to two pages at most -- and legible. Typed letters are best. State your purpose in the first paragraph and keep the rest of the letter to the point. If you are writing about a specific bill, cite its title or number.[27] You can also include articles from your local paper that deal with child care or any facts you may have about early childhood opportunities in your district or state. Be sure to include your name and address in your letter. Understand that *any* letter is better than *no* letter, and use form letters if necessary. When encouraging a large group of people to write letters, give them some phrases or facts they can include, but urge them to personalize each letter.

- Use phone calls to involve the "politically shy." Callers often speak to a receptionist or an answering machine and can leave a quick message stating whether they support a bill or not.[28] If you schedule a lobby day, follow it with a "call-in day" for those who could not make it to the state Capitol. Unlike letters, phone calls are better done in a "form" style. Phone calls will be more effective if you provide a script for people to use when they call in, so everyone is giving the identical clear message.

Be Reasonable

- Be thoughtful about your expectations of your network. They will be more likely to respond to action requests if these requests are reasonable and considerate of the other demands on their time. People will not respond to an "urgent" alert every week.

> The Washington state Children's Budget Coalition mails a weekly "Take Five For Kids" to their legislative network. This provides people with tasks they can do for children's issues in five minutes or less, such as calling three legislative leaders about issues that are hot that week. "Take Five" includes telephone numbers and addresses and the coalition's current lobbying agenda.

Give Feedback

- Give your network regular updates that show the impact of their actions. If a bill comes out of committee, if a key legislator announces support, if the bill passes one House -- let your network know and thank them for their good work in moving the issue forward.

10. Use Your Legislators As A Resource

Remember that legislators were elected to serve their constituents. By asking legislators for help, you save your own time and energy and increase their awareness of early childhood issues. Legislators can offer you information about a bill's status and the next steps necessary for passage. They also have access to analysis and resources that advocates may not have.

- Ask legislators for information that would be helpful. For example, in Wisconsin a legislator asked the Legislative Fiscal Bureau to analyze the impact of a proposal to increase parent fees. This analysis revealed that parent fees would rise dramatically, placing many child care options out of reach for low-income parents. Legislators who sponsor research on child care will take ownership of the results and will be more likely to champion improvements in child care.

- Encourage legislators friendly to child care to recruit new supporters in the legislature. Legislators are the best people to persuade other legislators to support a particular issue. Obviously, they are likely to have closer relationships with their legislative colleagues than you do. Personal relationships between legislators can make or break a bill.

11. Learn To Compromise And Negotiate

Realize that the legislative process involves compromise. Unfortunately, no final bill, regulation, or administrative decision, is constructed exactly as advocates would design it. While you must be persistent and relentless in your pursuit of a bill, you must also understand when to compromise, declare victory, and celebrate a win. Effective advocates recognize that change often happens in small steps toward an ultimate goal.

Build Relationships

- ✧ Be seen by legislators as someone who can help them when they are down to the wire and need assistance in working out the details of a final bill. While you want to be viewed as someone who is clear and uncompromising about your core values and long-term vision you also want to be seen as someone who is reasonable and thoughtful when the time comes to work out a compromise. Be willing to help legislators work through the conflicting issues tied to passing a bill. By helping to draft a final bill and bringing your real-world knowledge about child care to the table, you can ensure that the bill will really help families and children and will move child care forward, not backward.[29]
- ✧ Offer positive solutions for change and provide alternatives to initiatives that limit families' access to high-quality child care. Try to stay away from "anti" positions and rhetoric. Always give options, rather than just stating the problem.

Be Realistic

- ✧ Be prepared to make tough choices. Advocates must often decide which pieces of their agenda are the most necessary, the most worth fighting for, and the most winnable. These decisions can mean abandoning certain smaller initiatives or at least putting some issues on the back burner.

12. Express Your Appreciation And Give Credit To Your Legislator

While it is important to hold accountable any legislator who has voted wrong, never forget how good it feels to be thanked, and always extend that courtesy to legislators and staff with whom you have worked. Elected officials rarely get thanked in a genuine way. Do not wait for someone else to thank them; take the initiative and do it first. If legislators believe their efforts are noticed and appreciated, they are more likely to pursue a positive agenda in the same direction.

Be Appreciative

- ✧ Remember to write letters of praise to legislators promptly after they pass a favorable bill or do other good things for child care. A thank-you letter will reinforce their behavior and take you a long way the next time a child care issue arises. If a legislator attends a seminar or presentation that you host, definitely follow up with a thank-you note and an offer to serve as an information source. Also thank members of the media who give you coverage and support.

- ✧ Honor legislators, staff members, bureaucrats and governors who have been long-time champions of better children's policies or who successfully fought for an early childhood initiative. Invite them to your annual meeting or banquet, and reward them with a plaque or donation to their favorite charity. Invite them to the graduation of a child care class and honor them there.

- ✧ Spend time with reporters who are writing stories about a child care initiative and your legislator's role in helping move child care forward. Good press about their role in helping children and families is helpful for legislators, especially in their local media outlets.

13. Work With Candidates Before They Get Elected

Offering information on early childhood to all candidates before an election is an effective way to educate prospective office-holders. Before you start, make sure to familiarize yourself with the restrictions for nonprofit groups in election-year activities. Any political activity your organization undertakes *must* be nonpartisan, and your assistance must be offered to every candidate running. If you succeed in articulating the importance of quality child care to all of the candidates and their staffs, then whoever wins will be committed to moving a child care agenda forward. Remember to be sensitive to timing: a child care campaign might be successful in an election year, when candidates are sensitive to "gender" issues.

Be Proactive

- ✧ Request a meeting with each candidate and his or her policy people, to explain why child care is important and what the gaps are in your community and state. Prepare for this meeting with the same type of thorough research on the candidates and the campaign staffers as you do for current elected officials. Inform them that you are meeting with all candidates; if one candidate is endorsing your ideas, let the other candidates know. You will be better off if you practice full disclosure.

Child care leaders in North Carolina understood that their state was ready for major changes in early care and education. Working together, they developed a vision of a comprehensive initiative to meet each community's child care needs. Then, they approached gubernatorial candidate James B. Hunt about the idea. Their vision became a key component of Governor Hunt's children's agenda, under the name of Smart Start. This initiative brings community representatives together to design and implement their own vision for strengthening the early care and education system in their counties. Today, thanks to the visionary leadership of North Carolina's children's advocates, Smart Start is funded and operating in more than 40 counties.

- ✧ Work with the individuals who are developing each candidate's platform, and encourage them to place a child care initiative in the plan. If you succeed at this, the winning candidate's staff will know you as a resource on child care issues.
- ✧ Put together a forum on child care or children's issues during the election process and invite all the candidates to speak. This helps candidates by giving them a chance to speak to voters, while raising their awareness about child care. Consider publishing their comments in your network newsletter.

Speak Out

- ✧ Attend town meetings and candidate forums and ask candidates to explain their positions on child care. During the campaign to pass the Act for Better Child Care (Child Care and Development Block Grant), child care advocates attended town meetings frequently to ask their candidates whether they supported the bill. This gave candidates a sense that the bill was a key issue for their constituents.

Be Careful

- ✧ If you work with a nonprofit organization, remember that you can devote time and resources to an individual candidate only if it is *your own* time and has no association with the nonprofit organization you work for.

14. Do Not Forget The Executive's Office

To be an effective advocate at the state level, you will need to focus your efforts beyond the legislature and interact with the governor and her or his staff as well. You'll need to have year-round interaction with the governor's office, especially in states with short legislative sessions. The governor is important in the following ways:

- ✧ The governor's office prepares the annual or bi-annual budget that is sent to the legislature for approval. Work with the staff who develop the outlines of the initial budget (often in the offices of planning and budgeting); encourage them to include new funds for child care. Make sure the governor knows the importance of investing increased dollars in child care. The governor's support for increases in early childhood

funding is crucial, as many legislative committees begin their deliberation on the budget with the governor's recommendations. If the governor supports an increase in child care funding, it is key to work with the legislature so they support the additional funds. If the governor's budget does not include adequate early childhood provisions, encourage your legislators to add new funds.[30]

- ✧ The governor sets the tone for the legislative session by setting out legislative priorities in her or his State of the State address. This is an opportunity for the governor to mention child care as a priority to the legislature and to unveil new initiatives.
- ✧ The governor has the power to veto a bill or sign it into law. Know how much time the governor of your state has to either veto or sign a bill after it is passed by the legislature.
- ✧ Do the same homework on the governor's and the governor's staff's backgrounds as you do with the legislature. Determine what experience your governor has had with child care and work from there.

15. WORK WITH AGENCY ADMINISTRATORS

State and local agencies, as part of the executive branch, can play a very influential role in shaping child care policy. Good relationships with state and local agency offices, both career staff and political appointees, are as important as strong relationships with legislators. Responsible for implementing the laws, these agencies have significant influence over the fate of state policies. A strong presence at the agency level is imperative if you want your legislative goals to be implemented effectively once they are law.

BE INVOLVED

- ✧ State agencies make many of the initial state budget recommendations. Therefore you need to work to influence their recommendations by meeting with agency staff and officials before and while they prepare their budget proposal. As soon as the budget for one year is passed by the legislature, state agencies begin working on the next one. Working at this stage is the most effective way to ensure that there is sufficient money set aside for child care.[31]
- ✧ State agencies make recommendations on policies to the legislature and testify at committee hearings. Seize the opportunity to use your expertise to help them shape their recommendations and testimonies.
- ✧ Once a bill is enacted into law, agencies develop the regulations or administrative policies that govern its implementation. Regulations can drastically limit or enhance the effectiveness and scope of the law. Work with agencies on regulations before they are promulgated. Organize child care advocates to comment on the regulations and work with agency staff to help them understand what improvements can be made in the regulations. Most states publish proposed regulations so citizens can review them and recommend changes before they are finalized. Challenge the regulations in court if necessary.[32]

BE PREPARED

- ✧ Do your homework at the agency level. A state agency is made up of a variety of bureaucrats with distinctly different backgrounds. The head of the agency is appointed by the governor and will most likely reflect the governor's politics. Other bureaucrats may be career bureaucrats who have remained (or will remain) in the agency through several governors, moving up through the ranks of state government. These individuals are less political. It is important to consider each individual's role in the bureaucracy, and his or her view of the world and of child care.[33] Develop relationships with the people in the bureaucracy who contribute to decisions; tailor your message to each one's experience level and knowledge base.

- ✧ Understand that sometimes a state agency will be unable to act independently of a governor's orders. If a governor feels very strongly about an issue, don't expect the agency to take an official stance that is contrary to the governor's. However, if you find someone in an agency who is sympathetic to your issue, she or he may be able to give you strategies for working with the governor's office.[34]

ENDNOTES

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2. Nancy Amidei, *So You Want To Make A Difference.* Washington, D.C.: OMB Watch, 1991; p. 36.

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4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Hopper and Kerns.

8. *State Legislative Leaders: Keys to Effective Legislation for Children and Families.* Centerville, MA.: State Legislative Leaders Foundation, 1995; p. 30.

9. Ibid, 29.

10. Ibid, 24.

11. Ibid, 30.

12. Sally Hopper and Peggy Kerns, "Effective Strategies for Working with State Legislatures," presented to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Spring Leadership Conference, April 12, 1996.

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14. Ibid.

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19. Child Care Law Center, *Child Care Advocacy: Making a Difference*: September 1995; pp.5-6.

20. Hopper and Kerns, 44.

21. *Child Care Advocacy*, 3.

22. Hopper and Kerns.

23. Amidei, 37.

24. Hopper and Kerns, 22.

25. Ibid, 45.

26. Amidei, 18.

27. Hopper and Kerns.

28. Amidei, 18.

29. Ibid, 22.

30. *Child Care Advocacy*, 3.

31. Ibid, 3.

32. Amidei, 14.

33. Mike Breslin, "Working with State Legislatures," presented to the Children's Defense Fund Annual National Conference, February 10, 1996.

34. Ibid.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

1. "Voices of the Pennsylvania Child Care System."
   Sample Parent Quotes from The Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies

Fact Sheets

1. "Child Care: An Important Community Issue."
   Sample from Focus On Our Future, York, Pennsylvania

2. "Ohio Children -- Together We Can Help Them Grow."
   Sample from the Ohio Children's Defense Fund

3. "10 Reasons Why Wisconsin's W-2 Plan is Bad for Children."
   Sample from the Children's Defense Fund

4. "Stenholm Substitute Ignores Importance and Need for Greater Child Care Assistance in the South."
   Sample from the Children's Defense Fund

5. "The Immigration Bill Will Seriously Harm Legal Immigrant Children."
   Sample from the Children's Defense Fund

Crime Prevention and Children Material

1. Media Advisory

2. "What if We Invested in Crime Prevention Programs from Toddlers to Teens?"
   Sample from the National Advisory Committee,
   Fight Crime: Invest in Kids

Sample Legislative Agenda

1. "Child Care WORKS 1995 Legislative Agenda"
   Sample from Child Care WORKS, Minneapolis, Minnesota

APPENDIX B

1. Washington State Legislative Simulation.
   Sample from the Nancy Amidei, *Fair Budget Action Campaign,* Seattle, Washington

PACCA
PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF CHILD CARE AGENCIES
411 Walnut Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101 717-236-0458

[The following quotes are excerpted from a Pennsylvania child care publication]

Voices of the Pennsylvania Child Care System

Compiled by

The Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies

2/95

THE VOICE OF A CHILD

Day care is the place I go,
To learn new things and help me grow.

While I am at day care - kept safe and well fed,
Mommy works hard for a roof over my head.

The money's not much and our home may be small,
But she's working and trying and giving her all.

Our future she wants to be better than today,
But the government now wants to take all that away.

Less funding would hurt the children you see.
Think not of yourselves, but also of me.

I am the future, so please make it bright,
Preserving day care funding could only be right.

You have the power, it's all in your vote -
My life's in your hands - Will I sink or float?

I am a certified and degreed teacher in Early Childhood Education as well as being a registered and concerned voter. . . . My point is simple, to cut child care funding and the food program would seriously hurt these children. Their parents are trying hard to improve the lives of their children by working and going to school. Take away the funding and you prevent them from being able to work or cause the children to be left alone. The obvious result is more families on welfare. . . . I wrote the above poem to express for the children what they can't tell you themselves. America needs a bright future, filled with healthy, intelligent, self-confident people . . . . We can invest a little now or pay dearly in the future.

Christina P.
Coatesville

As a single parent, I depend on the child care program an awful lot. The teachers have received a lot of training and do an excellent job. . . . The children enjoy the structured programs and I have peace of mind knowing they are safe and in a place where they can learn. We must continue to receive money for child care to make sure quality programs are available. . . . Without child care - I would truly be lost!

William Y.
Greensburg

Child care has enabled me to get a good job and an education. If I had to solely pay for my children's care it would be more than I bring home. Therefore, it would be impossible for me to work and I would probably be on welfare. I do not want to be on welfare.

Cynthia Y.
Erie

FOCUS ON OUR FUTURE

Working for York County's Young Children!

Focus on our Future is a community-wide initiative convened by York Foundation in partnership with the United Way of York County and Penn State York to improve the quality, affordability and accessibility of child care for young children under six years of age in York County. The Steering Committee listed below, and over 100 representatives from throughout the community interested in the child care issue, worked together to create the goals and measures for effectiveness described in this document.

Steering Committee

Janice Herrold, *Chairman, York Foundation*
Marsha Brubaker, *General Graphic Services*
Meg Brubaker, *Penn State York*
Hayleen Carlini, *York Even Start*
Thomas Donley, *York County Chamber of Commerce*
Nancy Eberly, *YMCA of York and York County*
Donna Fancher, *Parent*
Cindy Fernsler, *Child Care Consultants, Inc.*
Barbara Fleak, *Consultant, Child Care*
Sandra Gayle, *Touch of Country Day Care Center*
Laura Gibble, *Child Care Consultants, Inc.*
Paula Gilbert, *Martin Library*
Phyllis Hawkins, *Head Start*
Ellen Helfrick, *The Playcare Place*
Lorraine Hovis, *Past Chairman, Focus On Our Future*
Jane Keat, *Penn State York*
Paul Kilker, *General Graphic Services*
Joan Lamberson, *Penn State Cooperative Extension Service*
George Moore, *Community Progress Council*
Fifi Spangler, *Jewish Community Center*
Carolyn Steinhauser, *York Foundation*
Rep. Stephen Stetler, *PA House of Representatives*
Dr. William Thompson, *Dallastown Area Schools*
Robert Woods, *United Way of York County*
William Zimmerman, *York Foundation*
Patricia Hogg, *Project Consultant*

For more information on Focus On Our Future, call (717) 854-2273.

Child Care: an Important Community Issue

...for the children. As much as 60% of a child's total development occurs prior to entering kindergarten. High quality child care can provide the foundation for a lifetime of success. The nature of the relationship between child care provider and child has a profound impact on the child's cognitive, social and emotional development.

...for the children's immediate families. The confidence which results from a parent's knowledge of his/her child spending time in a safe and stimulating environment, receiving care which is dependable and reliable significantly lessens the guilt and anxiety experienced by working parents.

...for employers. Research indicates employees who are secure in their child care arrangements and other family-related issues can be more focused at work, leading to improved productivity. Employers who are sensitive to work-family concerns inspire stronger loyalty from their employees. These elements lead to reduced absenteeism and turnover-positively affecting employers' productivity and profitability.

...for the community. An investment in early childhood care and education has a measurable impact on the entire community. Children who enter school with a strong feeling of self-worth and who are prepared to learn receive maximum benefit from their educational experiences. These children develop into literate, skilled, self-sufficient adults.

York County Facts

- Nearly 18,000 York County children under age 6 spend 85% of their waking hours in care provided by someone other than their parents.
- The primary care-givers of 62% of York County children work outside the home, compared to the national average of 55%.
- While there are 209 regulated child care providers in York County, currently only two hold the distinction of national accreditation.
- Access to subsidized child care is a significant problem for lower income York County families. In 1995, 549 children were receiving subsidized child care while another 412 were on the waiting list.
- York County's median income families with young children spend 15-27% of their gross income on child care.
- Only 30 of the 75 child care centers in York County provide infant care. Some of these have waiting lists up to one year.

Funding for Focus On Our Future has been provided by The Howard D. Heinz Endowment, The Pew Charitable Trusts, The Bon-Ton Stores Foundation, The Donley Foundation, General Graphic Services, Susquehanna-Pfaltzgraff Foundation, Wolf Foundation, York Area Association For The Education of Young Children (YAAEYC), York County Medical Society Alliance, and York Federal Savings & Loan Foundation.

Ohio Children—
Together We Can Help Them Grow

Invest in Child Care and Help Parents Work

"Child care tops the list of needs for city children."

—Critical Needs, Critical Choices: A Survey on Children and Families in America's Cities
National League of Cities/March 1996

Ohioans understand a family's need for child care when both parents or the only parent works. Affordable child care in a safe and healthy home or center keeps families working by allowing parents who are employees to concentrate on their jobs.

More Parents Join the Work Force

The last Census reported that the rate of Ohio mothers with children under age six in the labor force had grown to nearly 60 percent. Whether care is provided in a home or a center, it often is not cheap. In 1995, it cost as much as $87 a week or more to pay for preschool care in a child care center. No wonder child care is sometimes referred to as *the second mortgage*. A single parent earning $6/hour would spend more than one-third of pre-tax income on child care.

Steady Progress —But Mounting Need

Ohio enacted welfare reform legislation last year that will move more ADC families to employment. Currently, child care aid is guaranteed to ADC families in work or training programs. In fact, families who cannot find child care are exempt from JOBS. Unfortunately, some federal welfare reform proposals would increase child care funding but eliminate the guarantee. These families will need child care aid to work; and as low-income workers their need for child care assistance will continue.

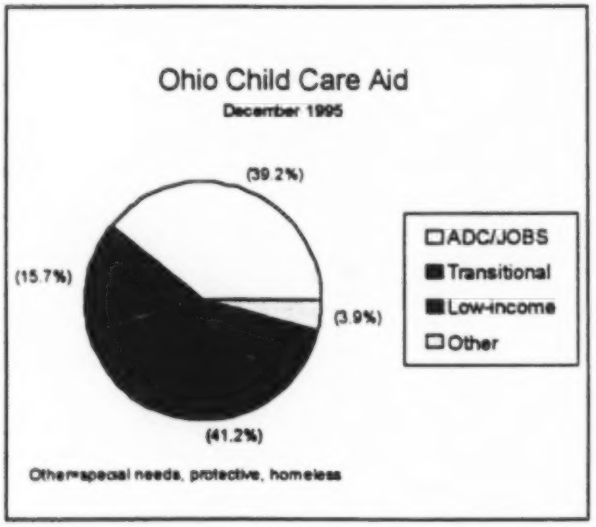
Limited Resources for Low-Income Families

Public child care aid for low-income families is where there is more flexibility but limited resources. From January to June 1995 nearly 24,000 children from low-income working families received public aid for their child care. Because child care is not guaranteed to these families and funding is capped, Ohio tightly controls access to child care aid for non-ADC families. For example, a family of three could only make up to $8.42/hour to be eligible for aid.

Who Receives Public Child Care Aid?

State and federal child care assistance is **guaranteed** to families who:

- receive ADC and are in work and training programs
- transition from welfare to employment (for up to 12 months)



State and federal aid is available but **not guaranteed** to:

- modest income families in work or training programs
- children in protective or special needs care and homeless children

(See "Who Receives. . ." other side)

Ohio Should Increase Its Investment in Child Care

With need certain to grow, Ohio should increase its investment in child care funding. ***The next two-year state budget will provide an opportunity for Ohio to build on its current investment in children.*** In 1994, the Children's Defense Fund-Ohio, the Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children, the Public Children Services Association of Ohio, and other groups called for a $25 million per year budget increase in state funding for child care for the working poor. The state budget was increased by $5 million annually. Ohio's current share of child care aid funding is 35 percent.

Program	1994 Actual Spending	1996 Budget	1997 Budget
ADC/JOBS and Transitional	$72.0	$105.6	$114.3
Working Poor	$52.8	$78.8*	$79.3*
Total	$124.9	$184.3	$193.6

($s in millions)
* includes carryover of federal funds

Who Receives Public Child Care Aid? (Continued)

In December 1995 child care aid was provided to more than 51,000 children:

- 39 percent from ADC families in the JOBS work and training program
- 16 percent from families who left ADC for work during the past 12 months (Transitional)
- 41 percent in low-income working families
- 4 percent in protective or special needs care and homeless children
- An additional 9,000 children are projected to be served in 1997.

Child Care Makes ¢ents

Businesses save money from reduced absenteeism rates and stress levels and make money from increased worker productivity when chld care is available. businees incur costs when employees can not find reliable, affordable, quality child care.

What is the Return on Investment?

Good Child Care

- helps children prepare for school and starts them on the road to becoming our future workforce
- adds to the economic base of the community by creating local employment opportunities
- helps parents remain taxpayers by keeping their jobs, and
- supports a dependable workforce for local business

Poor Child Care

- damages early development and
- jeopardizes children's safety

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Children's Defense Fund-Ohio
Robin Harris, Advocate
52 East Lynn Street · Suite 400
Columbus, Ohio 43215
614.221.2244
MAY, 1996

10 REASONS WHY WISCONSIN'S W-2 PLAN IS BAD FOR CHILDREN

1. **Children in families where parents cannot find jobs despite their best efforts will be poorer because of W-2.**
   Families only get help when parents are participating in work activities, but there is no assurance that sufficient placements will be available for parents. Moreover, at the end of the 60-month time limit, if a parent cannot find work, the whole family--including the children--loses all cash aid.

2. **Children in families where parents *are complying fully* with work placement requirements will be poorer because W-2 requires them to pay much more for child care and Medicaid.**
   In Milwaukee County, the minimum health and child care co-payments for a mother with two children would be $904 a year,or $75 a month, even for a family receiving only $518 a month (52 percent of the federal poverty line). Taking all forms of aid into account, that family would be $57 worse off each month compared to current AFDC families.

3. **Child care will not be assured for needy families even though parents of children as young as twelve weeks will be required to work.**
   Although Wisconsin has invested more dollars in child care, they have dramatically increased the demand and eliminated the guarantee that families trying to leave welfare for work will get needed child care help. Child care shortages are expected to be especially intense for the youngest babies. The Planning Council of Milwaukee says there are only six child care providers for every 100 infants. 28 percent of all licensed child care centers in Milwaukee County do not accept infants under age one.

4. **Children will be forced into low-quality child care at higher cost.**
   In Milwaukee County, parents with incomes just above the poverty line would have to pay up to 10 times as much as they do now for licensed care, and about four times as much for a new category of unlicensed, untrained child care.

5. **All guarantees of health coverage for children and families under the W-2 waiver would be repealed.**
   *According to the Wisconsin state statute, the new program is "in lieu of" Medicaid. The statute states: **"Notwithstanding fulfillment of the eligibility requirements for any component of Wisconsin works [i.e., including Medicaid], an individual is not entitled to services or benefits under Wisconsin works." The waiver would convert Wisconsin's Medicaid program into a block grant.** (Emphasis added).*

6. **Many children and parents guaranteed Medicaid under current law will lose health coverage if they work.**
   Children age 12 and older and parents could no longer receive Medicaid if they are offered health coverage through work, even if they are never actually covered because they are asked to pay unaffordable premium amounts (including, in some cases, the entire premium).

7. **The waiver would deny necessary health care to children.**
   Wisconsin would be the only state exempt from the requirement under Medicaid's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) program that children receiving Medicaid must be covered for the range of medically necessary health care they need. The state could deny coverage of a particular prescription drug, for example, even if no other service would cure a child's illness.

8. **Infants and their teen parents will not receive *any* cash assistance even when they live at home or in a supervised setting.**
   Teen parents and their children who cannot live safely at home will get no help unless already overburdened child protection agencies agree to take them into care.

9. **Assistance for children of disabled parents will be slashed.**
   When the parent receives SSI, assistance will be cut to $77 per child, about a 28 percent reduction in total assistance for a family with two children.

10. **An estimated 2,200 children currently living with grandparents or other caretaker relatives will be cut off from assistance.**

For more information, contact the Children's Defense Fund. (Deborah Weinstein, (202) 662-3565.)
(6/5/96)

STENHOLM SUBSTITUTE IGNORES IMPORTANCE AND NEED FOR GREATER CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE IN THE SOUTH

Working parents in the South have child care needs that are even more urgent than those facing parents throughout the rest of the country.

- The South has a higher proportion of mothers with young children in the labor force (49.8 percent) than the nation as a whole (45.6 percent).
- Two out of every five mothers with young children who are in the labor force live in the South.

Between 1981 and 1988, total expenditures for child care assistance have decreased in just about every Southern state while the numbers of mothers in the labor force have increased.

- For example, total expenditures for child care services in Alabama plummeted 48 percent enabling the state to serve 50 percent fewer children.
- Funding in Mississippi has decreased about 30 percent with 43 percent fewer children served.
- Although Florida has increased its total spending for child care services by 108 percent, it hasn't been enough to keep pace with families' needs. About 30,000 children still remain on Florida's waiting list for subsidized child care.

Southern voters believe that child care is a major problem which the federal government must address.

- 77 percent of Southern voters--the highest proportion in the nation--believe there is a shortage of child care that is affordable and of good quality. Voters in the South are more likely than the rest of the nation to identify child care as an important issue for working families. (Marttila & Kiley, June 1988)
- Three-fourths of Southern voters believe the federal government should help working parents obtain safe and affordable child care, and a majority prefer direct help to working parents as opposed to tax credits. (Marttila & Kiley, June 1988)
- Newspapers throughout the South have called for federal action on child care this year. The Atlanta Constitution noted that tax credits alone "won't cure the nation's child care problem" and called for "swift bipartisan approval" of comprehensive child care legislation. The Greensboro (NC) News and Record referred to tax credit proposals as "child play."

The Leadership's $1.75 billion child care package will provide far more desperately-needed assistance to working parents in the South than the Stenholm/Shaw proposal.

March 22, 1990

September 25, 1996 (updated)

Children's Defense Fund

The immigration bill will seriously harm legal immigrant children.

H.R. 2202, the Immigration Reform Bill, includes many provisions which will seriously harm legal immigrant children. Deleting the Gallegly amendment, which would effectively bar undocumented children from attending public schools, is an important change. However, it is essential that members recognize that the bill still will seriously harm many legal, documented children. Section 552 of the bill says that legal immigrants, including children, must have their sponsor's income deemed for any means-tested program (some exceptions are listed), effectively denying eligibility to most low-income immigrant children. Then section 532 says that if a legal immigrant (including a child) legitimately receives benefits under a means-tested program (for example, if the sponsor is dead), the person can be deported.

This means that legal immigrant children will be hurt in many ways:

- **Poor legal immigrant children, including infants and toddlers, whose parents work are barred from participating in federally-assisted child care programs** under the Child Care and Development Block Grant. The sponsor's income will be deemed and the parents and children risk deportation as public charges if the parents seek a safe place for their children while they work.

- **Many poor three- and four-year olds effectively will be barred from participating in Head Start's** comprehensive early childhood program and more likely to enter school unready to learn. On September 24, the conferees exempted Head Start as a basis for deportation as a public charge. However, the sponsor deeming rules would still apply and bar most children from Head Start.

- **While the new welfare law gives states an option to provide Medicaid to documented immigrants after five years, this bill would bar many sponsored immigrants, including children, from receiving Medicaid.** This would deny the well-baby and preventive health care all children need. Sponsor deeming and the fear of deportation (as a public charge) will place Medicaid out of reach of needy children.

- **Documented immigrant children will be barred from participating in other important means-tested programs like summer jobs and job training programs.** On September 24, the conferees exempted job training as a basis for deportation as a public charge. However, the sponsor deeming rules would still apply.

Congress reached a different result in the new welfare law which explicitly protects legal immigrant children's eligibility for Head Start and provides states some option to provide them Medicaid. Those legal immigrant provisions are already bad; Congress should not now worsen them.

Today's legal immigrant children are tomorrow's United States citizens, voters and taxpayers. They need child care, education, health care and job training.

Please vote to protect children by voting "no" on the conference version of H.R. 2202.

25 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
Telephone 202 628 8787
Fax 202 662 3510

Questions? Please call Eileen Sweeney (662-3586) or Helen Blank (662-3547).

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS

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POLICE LEADERS, PROSECUTORS, CRIME SURVIVORS SAY GREATER INVESTMENTS IN KIDS KEY TO FIGHTING CRIME

NEW POLL OF POLICE CHIEFS SHOWS OVERWHELMING AGREEMENT

Marc Klaas, Elliot Richardson, Major Police Organizations, Prosecutors, Crime Survivors and their Families Launch Bi-Partisan Campaign

---

Breakdown of poll by region and city size available

News Conference: Friday, July 26, 10:00 a.m.
National Press Club, Lisagor Room

Speakers:

Marc Klaas, Marc Klaas Foundation for Children, founded after his twelve-year old daughter Polly was abducted and murdered in California in 1993 (If, because of the trial schedule, Klaas can not be in Washington, he will be connected live from San Jose while awaiting the jury verdict.)

Matt L. Rodriguez, Superintendent, Chicago Police Department; Chairman, Major Cities Chiefs Organization and the Hispanic Institute of Law Enforcement

James Pasco, Executive Director of the 270,000-member Fraternal Order of Police, the nation's largest police organization

Patrick V. Murphy, Director, Police Policy Board, US Conference of Mayors; former Chief of Police, New York City, Detroit, Washington, D.C. and Syracuse

Carole Grant Hall, Director, Ginger Ridge Residents' Initiative in Chicago, IL; Ms. Hall's son Lateef was killed as he knelt to protect a toddler from strangers' crossfire.

Ellen Halbert, Vice-Chair of the Texas Board of Criminal Justice. Ms. Halbert was repeatedly raped, beaten with a hammer, and stabbed by an intruder in her home.

Sandy Newman, President, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids

State-By-State Data Available On Two Of The Key Factors Increasing The Odds That Kids Will Become Criminals

---

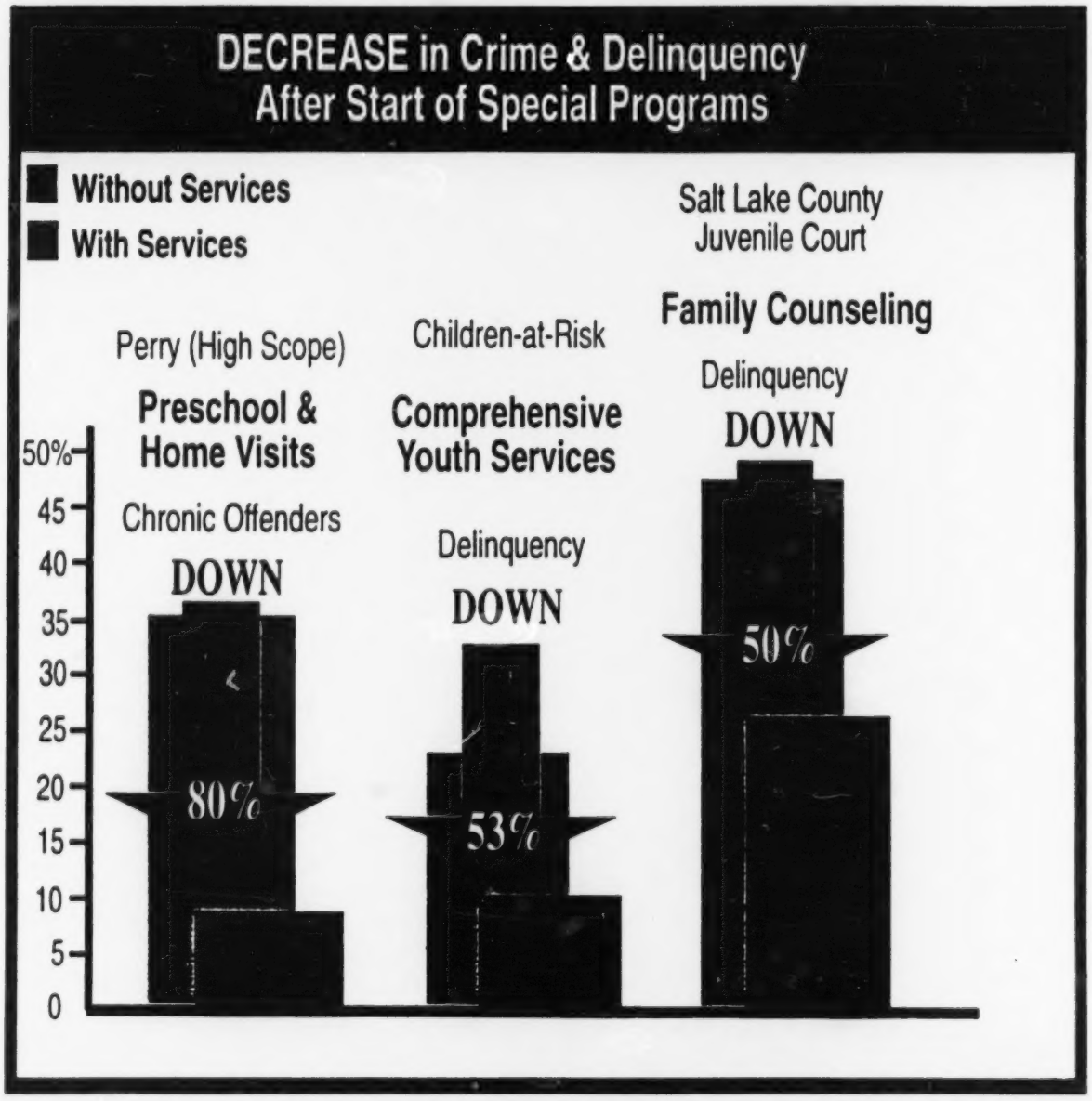
PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES: Police Chiefs and officers in uniform, mementos of loved ones lost to crime

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

1334 G Street, NW • Suite B • Washington, DC 20005-3107 • (202) 638-0690 • Fax (202) 638-0673 • E-mail: kids@essential.org

A project of the Action Against Crime and Violence Education Fund

What if We Invested in Crime Prevention Programs from Toddlers to Teens?



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Fight Crime: Invest in Kids
1-800

Child Care Keeps MN Working

Child Care WORKS 1996 Legislative Agenda

- *Ensure quality for all children in child care.*
- *Make child care affordable for all families.*
- *Support violence prevention in communities through school age care programming.*

CHILD CARE WORKS
Working Together for Child Care that Works

Children ARE Minnesota's Business

QUALITY

- *Support professional development for child care providers.*
- *Support quality standards for child care centers and homes.*

AFFORDABILITY

- *Support sliding fee assistance for parents in work or education.*
- *Focus tax relief on working families with young children.*

VIOLENCE PREVENTION

- *Expand supply of options for school age children when parents are working.*

CHILD CARE WORKS
Working Together for Child Care that Works

CONTACT
Polly Keppel
Child Care WORKS
1628 Elliot Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55404
(612) 341-1177
Fax (612) 341-4356

You Can Be Involved in...
"HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW": A Simulation

How a Bill Becomes A Law is a simulation exercise that gives participants the opportunity to become familiar, and comfortable, with the legislative process. Concerned citizens get an opportunity to follow a made-up bill through one house of the legislature, from its first committee hearing to its final destination -- the Governor's desk. Along the way they will learn: how the process works, how to testify, the effectiveness of working together, and how to lobby their legislators.

While the exercise was designed in Washington State, it is general enough to track the legislative process in most states. Where necessary, it is easily adapted. It has been tested with groups as small as 30 and as large as 150 (it helps to have at least 50 participants, plus "actors"). Participants have included women on welfare, residents of group homes, child advocates, health and social welfare professionals, faith community volunteers, students, service providers, local legislators, local prosecutors, senior citizens, social agency board members, Head Start parents and teachers, Junior League members, school system personnel, and more.

Each participant is given a packet that includes: a made-up bill; role-play instructions; descriptions and roles for one of **seven** citizen action groups; and advocacy ("how-to") information. Other role descriptions have been developed for individuals playing the parts of legislators, the governor, and members of the media, as well as for facilitators who help to guide each of the citizen groups through the process.

It is recommended that about 30 minutes be used at the beginning to remind participants how the process works, give them some quick tips for being effective in the legislative process, and explain the simulation.

The simulation itself lasts about two hours, and takes place in four "weeks." Each "week" lasts approximately 20 minutes; the end of each week is signaled by blowing a whistle. In addition, between Weeks Two and Three, and again between Weeks Three and Four, participants are given an opportunity to assess their positions and redefine their strategies. At the end, it helps to allow some time for de-briefing.

Altogether it is best to allow 2.5 to 3 hours for the entire process from start to finish. (Just moving from one hearing room to the next takes time, and occasionally the "hearings" or "floor action" run overtime.) Space requirements include one large room for the initial explanations/training (which is later converted to use as the House Floor); plus two break-out rooms that can be set up as hearing rooms. When there are over 65 participants, we recommend having additional rooms and actors so that two "hearings" are conducted simultaneously -- thus giving more participants opportunities to testify.

Nancy Amidei University of WA School of Social Work, (206) 685-3168
Fair Budget Action Campaign
PO Box 31151, Seattle, WA 98103, (206) 727-0370 / W. 315 Mission, Spokane, WA 99201, (509) 326-8110

THE SIMULATION

Week One: participants meet with the members of their assigned groups to develop a position on the bill, consider arguments, and plan a strategy -- including finding allies.

Week Two: participants make their case before the policy (or authorizing) committee. This committee's chief interest is in the substance of the proposal and how it would work. One or two members from each citizen group will sign up to testify before the committee. At this stage the bill is often amended in response to testimony.

Week Three: participants now make their case before the Appropriations Committee. The chief interest here is cost. The bill may be amended once again.

Throughout, participants are encouraged to meet with the Speaker of the House, the Governor, and the media. And they get opportunities to meet briefly with their legislators as they move from room to room, using newly-acquired skills.

Week Four: the action now moves to the House Floor. (Rules Committee action is announced but not shown.) Legislators argue positions; debate; offer amendments; & vote. Participants can send messages in to their legislators as the bill is debated on the House Floor, urging particular action, or asking them to come out and speak with their constituents. If the bill passes, it goes to the Governor to be signed (or vetoed). With the explanation that this is a departure from the normal process, the Governor announces whether the bill will be signed or vetoed immediately following Floor action.

Facilitators then "de-brief" participants, asking what they learned, what surprised them, whether they had any questions or found anything confusing, what they might do differently as a result of participating in the Simulation, what sort of help they'd need to stay (or get) involved. At this point resources are also identified for participants (e.g. books, newsletters, FAX lists, relevant advocacy organizations, information about the League of Women Voters, Capitol "hot lines" and key telephone numbers).

. . . . . .

"How A Bill Becomes A Law" was created by Nancy Amidei and the Fair Budget Action Campaign. Initial development of the Legislative Simulation was made possible by a grant from the Seattle Archdiocese' Campaign for Human Development. Groups that use the Simulation are encouraged to make a one-time donation to the Fair Budget Action Campaign of $200.

If you have any questions, or would like additional information, please contact Nancy Amidei at (206) 685-3168 or the Fair Budget Action Campaign at (206) 727-0370.

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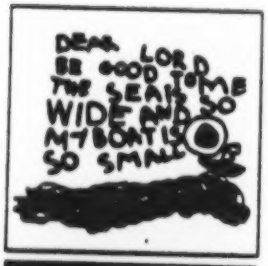

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